

Spirit-Filled Pastor Reveals 8 Ways to Pray for Yourself

Some people struggle to pray for themselves. If you're one of them, remember, Jesus prayed for Himself (see John 17:1-5), and He was perfect.

Therefore, it is perfectly good for you to do the same and pray for yourself. If you're struggling with how to do this, here are eight ways you can pray for yourself.

1. **Pray to live "kingdom down."** One day, when all is said and done, Jesus Christ will return to earth, bringing the unseen realm of heaven together with the seen realm of earth to answer His prayer, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10, ESV). Eternity will have only two cultures. The culture of hell will be marked by bitterness, isolation, fear, regret, pain, loss, injustice and hopelessness. The culture of heaven will be marked by forgiveness, relationship, faith, thankfulness, blessing, gain, grace and hope.

Until that day, this world is where we invite heaven down or pull hell up into our lives through the practical decisions that we make every day. Truth, love, forgiveness, and servanthood are how we invite the Holy Spirit and heaven down into our lives. Lies, hate, bitterness and selfishness are how we pull unholy spirits and hell up into our lives.

2. **Pray to deepen your relationship with God.** Does God care about you? Yes: He's your Father! Does God listen to you? Yes: He's your Father! Does He want to help you? Yes: He's your dad! But even more than simply helping you, He wants to have an intimate relationship with you, and He can have that only if you spend time with Him in prayer.

3. **Pray to prepare yourself for big changes.** Most of us spend our time hoping and praying difficult moments will not come. In one sense, it is OK to pray nothing bad will happen to you. But sadly, if you are alive on this sinful planet, you will suffer. And when some of us suffer, we immediately protest to God that we did not deserve it. We act as if something strange is happening to us.

When these moments come, the best place to go is to the Father, just as Jesus did. When faced with God's ultimate plan for Him, which included tremendous suffering, He did not pray to get out of it; He prayed to get *through* it. For Christians, the way to get through is to keep praying.

4. **Pray to glorify God in all you do.** In our homes and cars, we have mirrors. A mirror has one job—to accurately reflect an image so that it can be seen clearly.

We are God's mirror. When He looks at our lives, He should be able to see Himself reflected in our character and conduct. For the Christian, the will of God is always the same: to glorify Him by reflecting His character no matter what situation we face.

We can make our worst decisions on our worst days. Or we can prayerfully determine not to waste our suffering, but instead, invest it so that our greatest misery leads to our greatest ministry.

5. **Pray to exercise your authority.** In the physical world, God's people often feel as if they are far more powerless than powerful. But because we are in Christ, and He has given us the authority the Father gave Him, we have all the power we need. Ephesians 2:5–6 says, “by grace you have been saved—and [God has] raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places

in Christ Jesus.”

When we pray, we are inviting the unseen realm to flood our seen realm, bringing the presence of God to empower our lives and win any spiritual battle Satan tries to engage us in.

6. **Pray to live in light of eternity.** Some people are not interested in heaven because it sounds hellish to them. The common cultural caricature of everyone looking like chubby babies in diapers, lounging on white clouds, playing harps and looking longingly at rainbows and winged horses is anything but a good sales pitch. These depictions of heaven that emerged during the Renaissance era of the fifteenth century couldn't be more different from what the Bible tells us heaven is actually like.

In His prayer, Jesus reveals that eternal life is a place with a person. “This is eternal life,” Jesus says, “that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Indeed, eternal life is life with God. It is knowing God, being connected to God, enjoying a relationship with God. Sadly, when eternal life is seen only as a place, the focus on God is lost. The truth is that although heaven is a glorious place, it would be hell if God were not present there.

When Jesus talks about eternal life, I love that He does not talk merely about where we go but mostly about who we get to be with forever.

7. **Pray to clarify God's will for you.** God invites us to faithfulness, not busyness. Being like Christ does not mean keeping ourselves busy and asking God to bless our frantic lives. Instead, we need to start with prayer and discover what God's will is for us. Then we can say yes to what we *should* be doing by saying no to lots of other things we *could* be doing.
8. **Pray to experience God's presence.** Jesus tells us that

in this life we will suffer as He did. Our hope is not to escape suffering but to find God's will in the midst of it. If you cannot get out of tough circumstances, God's presence can get you through them, and that is exactly what Jesus asks the Father for. Jesus closes His prayer for Himself, saying, "Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed" (John 17:5)

Jesus models for us the truth that before we can live a life that glorifies God, we must spend time in heartfelt prayer to know what will glorify God and then receive the Spirit's power to press forward until God truly is glorified.

How about you? How should you be praying for yourself? What opportunities has God given you to glorify Him, even while enduring hardship, pain and injustice? {eo}

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